



**REPORT
of the Archaeological Excavation at a Sheiling Site,
Achleum-a-Choid, Glen Feshie
Inverness-shire**

15th to 20th July 2006



With the kind permission of the Glen Feshie Estate

And financial assistance through the Cairngorm National Park Authority Grants Programme and Cairngorms Leader + Programme from European Structural Funds

**The Report of the Archaeological Excavation
at the Shieling Site, Achleum, Glen Feshie, Inverness-shire
by members of the North of Scotland Archaeological Society,
15th to 20th July 2006**

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Janet Hooper

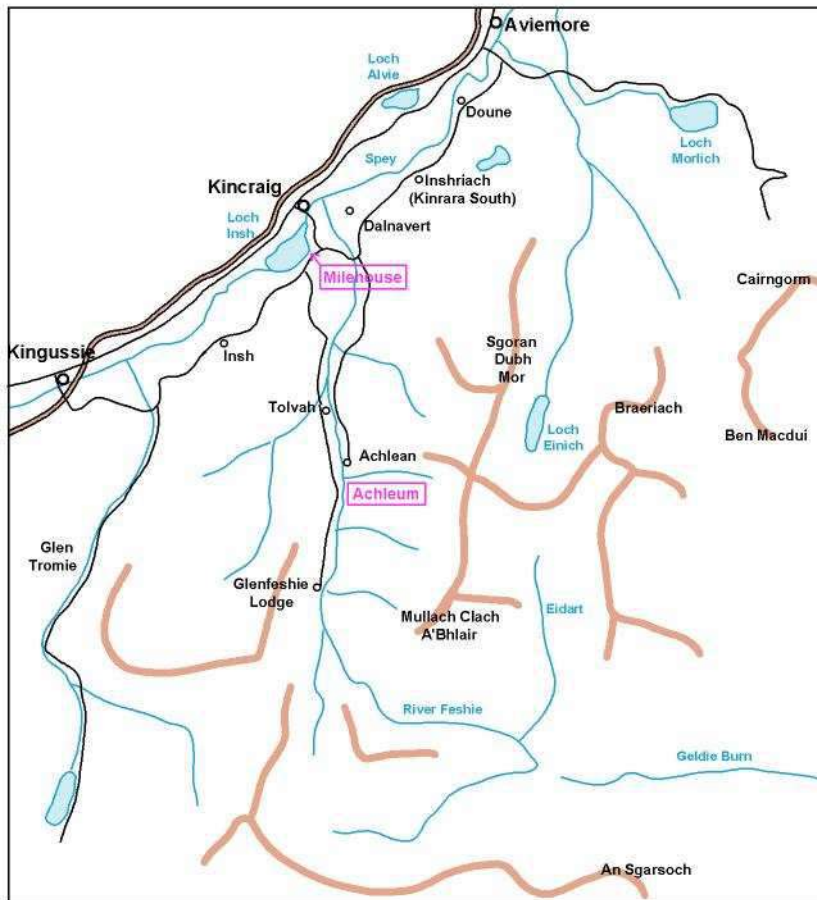
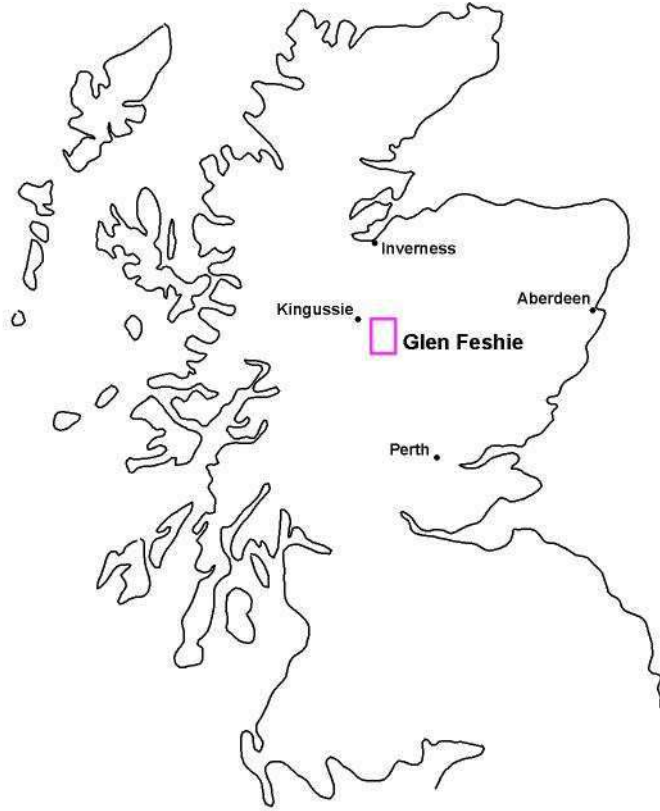
This report was compiled and produced by Meryl Marshall with
generous assistance from members of the team

Front page - Work progressing in Trench 2 from the south

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Location of Excavation



2. Introduction

The 2006 excavation aimed to continue and expand the project started by NOSAS members in Autumn 2004, during which a clearance cairn at Achleum-a-Choid in Glen Feshie, Inverness-shire, GR NN 85125 96683 was partially excavated. The 2004 excavation established that at least one of the two cairns, the NW, and probably the other to the SE, had a building underlying it. They were probably shieling huts and would have predated the nearby township of Achleum-a-Choid, although precise dating evidence was not found.

Two-thirds of the NW cairn was excavated and many questions remained unanswered. The building had a central hearth, which appeared to be rather an improvised affair - was it a later development? The entrance was angled through the wall so that it was pointing away from the prevailing wind and an external earthfast area of stones to the east of this entrance may have been a windbreak. The entrance seemed to have been blocked up - was this a later alteration? What was the purpose of the circular stone features at the north end - were they recesses for storing "coggies", the staved wooden vessels used to contain dairy produce or cheese presses? (see Appendix 1 for plan of building).

The SE cairn was surveyed and recorded in detail during the 2004 season. Its oval shape, form and dimensions were typical of a shieling hut. At each corner there was a mound and it was speculated that these were the bases for "tail-forks" (external hip gable props).

In addition, the stone footings of a further building were noted 50m to the south on the very edge of the river bank. This was only just visible and part of it may already have been truncated by the eroding river bank - was this an even earlier shieling?



The NW cairn/?building – pre excavation 2004

Copies of the 2004 report were circulated to all members who took part in the excavation, to Historic Scotland, the Highland Council Sites and Monuments Record, Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments, Kingussie Museum, Inverness Museum, Cairngorm National Park Authority.

Most of the aims of the 2004 excavation were achieved, but the amount of information recovered from the initial, quite limited, explorations, suggested that another season to complete the excavation of the NW cairn would be necessary to fully understand the building and to resolve the remaining unanswered questions. With this in mind, it was hoped that the 2006 excavation would reveal more details of its construction, as well as the activities which took place in and around it. It was also intended to undertake more detailed recording and excavation of the other two cairns at Achleum, to enable comparison between all three structures. In addition, reconnaissance of the area around this group of huts will allow the information retrieved from the excavation to be set into context of the broader use of the shieling grounds in this part of Glen Feshie.

The Aims and Objectives of the 2006 Project were therefore:

1. To complete the excavation of the building opened up in 2004. This would attempt to resolve the details of its construction and any adaptations which may have taken place. The trench would be extended to the NE to take in an area outside the entrance, to identify any possible working areas and to examine a possible midden mound.
2. To open a second trench over the feature, 50m to the south, at NN 85109 96635. The wasted remains of this building are on the eroding edge of the river bank and are in danger of falling away completely. This structure will be recorded in detail in order to establish a sequence of events and

to enable comparison with the other structures at this site.

3. To section one of the small mounds at the corners of the SE cairn/shieling. A section will be taken through one of the mounds in an attempt to establish whether or not it acted as the base for a "tail-fork".

4. To open a fourth trench, 2m in width across the centre of the SE cairn/building. On the basis of its surface appearance, this shieling appears very different to the nearby one so the aim of this trench will be to find dating evidence, as well as to establish the details of its construction. (NB - This aim was only to be attempted if sufficient resources and manpower were available - in the event the foregoing 3 trenches proved more complex than we had anticipated and there was not time to fulfil it)

5. To prospect for further archaeological remains in the surrounding area. Evidence for further structures and cultivation remains will be particularly important if a fuller picture of past human activity in this part of Glen Feshie is to be achieved. The two cairns/shielings were adjacent to a former small water course - had the course of this stream been altered at a higher point?



"Tailforks" in Newtonmore Folk Park

The project was to take place over a 6 day period. We had permission to drive up the private estate road so that it was possible to take a vehicle to the site. Once again we had the use of Milehouse, a self catering cottage at Kincaig - a shower and comfortable bed were much appreciated at the end of each day. A small grant, to cover some extra equipment and some of the food and accommodation for the participants, had been arranged from the Cairngorm National Park Authority Grants Programme and Leader +

Eleven NOSAS members were interested in helping, most for the whole time. The weather was fantastic, sunshine and wall to wall blue sky, almost too hot at times and on many of the days we finished with a dip in the pool below the "pony-bridge" to cool off!. We did not need to lower the tent when we left the site each night, as had been done during the 2004 excavation when it had succumbed to the wind, nor were we bothered with midges.

A notice giving information on our project and inviting people to visit us had been posted at the Achlean Car Park on the east side of the river, 25mins walk to the north. Roughly 60 visitors were given a guided tour of the site over the 6 day period.

3. Topography and surrounding environment

The River Feshie is a tributary of the River Spey. It rises in the hills to the southwest of the Cairngorm mountains close to the boundary of the Atholl and Mar Estates. The lower northern half of its course is a glaciated U-shaped glen with a flat valley floor and steep heathery sides. The eastern slopes of the Cairngorm mountains rise steeply out of the glen to a height of 1,200m. Inevitably they attract the rough weather from the west. Glen Feshie is renowned for its wet and windy weather and the river is prone to flash flooding in the wintertime, making its course well braided. Much of the glen is part of the Glen Feshie Estate which is maintained as a sporting estate.

Today there are only two permanently occupied settlements, south of Tolvah, but there is ample evidence for human activity over the last 400 years. There is evidence from both the archaeology and the place names for shieling sites. The gaelic place name Ruighe, Rie or Rea, which means "outstretched base of a mountain, or shieling ground" (Bil, 1990), occurs in the place-names of Rie-na-bruach, Ruighe Aiteachan, and Ruigh-Fionntaig. Several of these sites have been developed at a later date, with cultivation, more permanent occupation and townships replacing the former shielings.

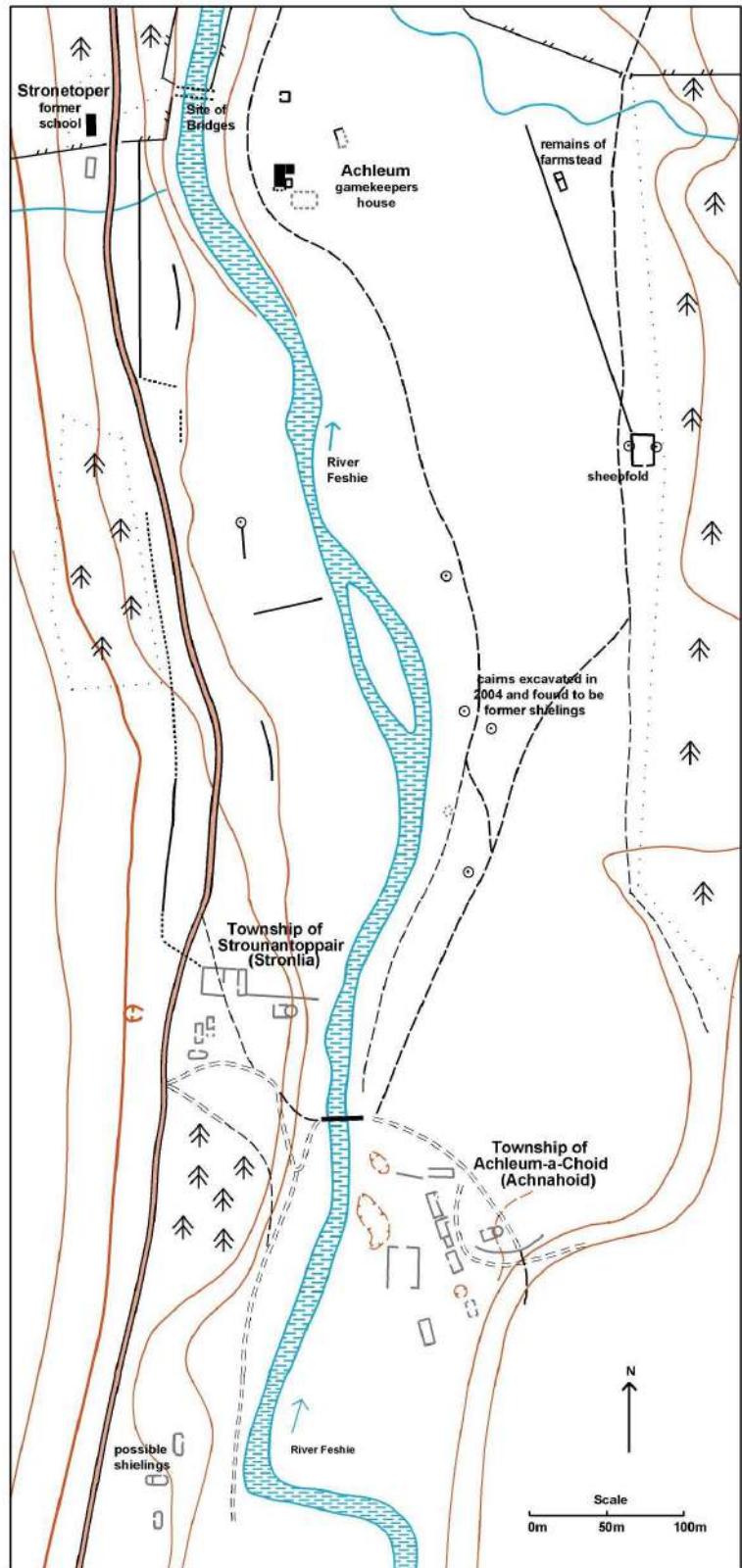
One such place is the site at Achleum. The name Achleum-a-choid, Achnahoid, Achleum-a-choit or

Achleum white is thought to mean “cottage of the field of the leap” - the “leap” referring to a narrow section of the river nearby, which now has the “pony bridge”, spanning it. The settlement, at NN 851 964 (SMR No - NN89NE0001) is situated on the valley floor on the east bank of the River Feshie, at the south end of an extensive flat area of improved ground. The heather covered footings of 7 structures, 1 enclosure and several obvious man-made depressions are seen. A single roofless building is depicted on the 1st edition map of 1872. The settlement is depicted on Roys military survey of c1750, and has cultivation rigs surrounding it.

The linear area of improved ground is roughly 600m in length, N-S, and between 150 and 200m in width. It is bounded on its west by a bank with a drop of 5m to the river. To the south east there is the curving bank of a former river terrace and to the NE the heather covered undulations of glacial moraine, now planted with commercial forest. The improved ground has lush grass in the main, with evidence of wide cultivation rigs. There are several low parallel gravelly banks cutting the area, which have rank heather and mossy turf covering them and were probably the edges of former spate channels.

The two cairns which are the target of this project and now established as shielings, are situated 300m to the north of the remains of the settlement of Achleum and are more or less in a central position on the flats. A few metres to the south of them a small watercourse is marked on the OS map. Nothing remains of this today apart from a wide dry shallow channel. The third target of the project is situated on the very edge of the river bank 50m to the south of the two shielings. A further cairn/?shieling can be found 100m to the north and is not part of the project.

At the north end of the improved ground there is a gamekeepers or watchers cottage at GR NN 850971 (SMR: NN89NE0009). It is marked on current OS maps as Achleum, the name almost certainly being taken from the settlement 600m to the south. Also at the north end of the flats there are the remains of a farmstead (NN89NE0002), an associated linear bank and a sheepfold. These are almost certainly connected with the early sheep farming days.



Archaeological remains at Achleum-a-Choid and surrounding area

4. Historical background

Glen Feshie is described as the “Summer shielings of Dalnavert” in the early titles for the davoch of Dalnavert. Transhumance, the practise of taking up residence in the hill pastures in the summer months so that the livestock could take advantage of the fresh grazing (and in order to keep them away from the growing crops and the pastures of the lower ground), continued in the Highlands for generations until the 18th or 19th Centuries. A large part of the activity at the shielings centred on the cattle. The womenfolk would milk the beasts and make dairy produce. Butter and cheese was an important commodity, not only as food, but for paying the rent and as barter for trading.

Generally speaking the construction of the shieling huts could be divided into two, although much was dependent on the materials that were available. The earlier shielings are of turf or turf and stone construction and their remains today have an oval mounded form. The later shielings are rectangular and constructed of stone (Fenton p134, Bil p238 - 244). On occasions and when available, timber was used for the walling of the buildings, but this was restricted in the early 18th century by landowners on many estates (Bil p242). By the 1780s, landowners were actively prescribing the use of stone.

Very often the shieling huts were in pairs with the smaller one serving as a dairy. On occasions it was quite usual for two sets of shielings to be linked with the same farm, one being more distant. This provided a better utilisation of grazing resources. In these cases it is very often the nearer shielings that are the rectangular ones, since they remained in use for longer, the more distant ones being deserted earlier (Fenton p139). Where cultivation was possible there are instances of corn being grown on the shieling grounds (Bil p219). Further quotes from Bil are presented in Appendix 2.

The decline and breakdown of the shieling system happened gradually over a period of time. It is complex and variable, and thought to be due to a number of factors. The conversion of shieling areas into hill grazing farms for sheep was contributory, as was the more permanent colonisation and cultivation of the shieling grounds, possibly as a result of population increase. The “improvements” and the ending of the old run-rig form of cultivation, where several tenants occupying a piece of land were replaced by a single farming unit was another factor (Fenton p138). The potato too is thought to have played a part. The crop needed more attention in the summer months than the traditional bere and oats.

The “Forrest of Glenfishie” is mentioned in an Act of Parliament of 1685. It seems to have been maintained as a hunting forest at that time. However Scrope (1883) reports:

“The whole of this vast tract (the land between Ben Avon and Ben Nevis) was not solely appropriate for breeding deer, for tenants were allowed to erect shielings in the confines of the forest and their cattle were permitted to pasture as far as they chose during the day, but they were bound to bring them back to the shielings in the evenings; and such as were left in the forest over night were liable to be pointed. These regulations answered very well between Huntly and his tenants, but they made an opening for small proprietors, who held in fee from the Gordon family, to make encroachments, and in course of time to acquire a property to which they had not the smallest legal title“. “No alteration took place in these forests till after the Rebellion of 1745 when the whole was let for grazing”

Bil in “*The Shieling 1600-1840*” (1990, p102) concurs:

“Forest owners actively encouraged settlement and agriculture in the neighbourhood of their forests even though it carried the risk of more permanent future expansion. As early as 1669 shiels were ordered to be erected in the Forest of Atholl to counter the encroachments of people from adjoining districts of Badenoch and Mar. At the turn of the 18th century Killiehuntley was ordered to grass in a place near the boundary between the Forests of Atholl and Spey, chiefly to prevent Speyside trespassers from encroaching on the grounds of the Forest of Atholl. Forest boundary keeping was an important function of shielings. It was not unknown though for grazing pressure within the forest to rise beyond the carrying capacity of the land where overstocked shielings competed too successfully with the deer and very often shieling activities were banned or resited to less exhausted zones of the forest”.

The earliest documentary evidence for the existence of Achleum-a-choid is in 1726 when John Shaw, described as tackman of Kinrara: “continuing in favour with his chief, obtains a tack of that part of Dalnavert called losal of Croftbeg and of Achleam-a-choid in Glenfeshie”. (Fraser-Mackintosh, 1898 p102). It is possible that it was used as a shieling ground at this time.

About this time too, it is clear that the woods in Glen Feshie were being exploited for their timber. The Avery map of 1735 has extensive "Firr woods" in the lower glen and a saw mill on the east bank of the river, probably on the Allt Garbhlach. On the adjacent Mar Lodge estates, there was concern that the forest was being over exploited by settlers who were occupying the shieling grounds. In 1719 an agreement was reached between the tenants and the estate, in which guidelines for the use of the forest were outlined:

"the removal of fir timber, except for use in roof-couples or of fir branches for cabers or rafters was banned, furthermore, no timber was to be used for the walls of shieling huts, fencing yards or corn-stacks".

This agreement allowed the landowner to limit the tenants use of the woods whilst at the same time exploiting the woods for profit himself. In 1726 Glen Lui was cleared in order that the landowner might proceed with improvements and the sale of timber. In conjunction with the felling operations a sawmill was established in 1727. In order to control the pressure of grazing animals sousing lists were drawn up in 1729, defining the number of cattle that could graze on a particular piece of ground (Mar Lodge survey, p8).

These restrictive measures were being mirrored in many areas of the Highlands (Bil, p223-225). Glen Feshie was a hunting forest, just as the Mar estate was. It is quite possible that a similar situation existed in Glen Feshie, although documentary evidence has yet to be found. The Roy map of 1750 has "Achnahoid" appearing in the position of our site. Rig cultivation is noted in the immediate vicinity, so it would seem that the settlement was well established and probably a single farming unit existed by this time. In 1786 rent was paid to Mackintosh of Mackintosh for Achleum White (taken as being Achleum-a-choid) (NAS GD 176/1514) and continued until 1804.

Sheep rearing was introduced into the Highlands in the early years of the 18th century, but it was not until the 1760s, when landowners encouraged shepherds from southern districts of Scotland to settle in the Highlands as part of "the Improvements", that it took hold. Farming and sheep rearing could co-exist, but the shieling system by this time was in decline.

The rearing of sheep in Glenfeshie had commenced in 1753, but it would also seem that the pasturing of cattle by his tenants continued. It is not clear whether any of the population was removed from the glen at this time, if they did leave it is entirely possible that they went voluntarily. A short distance to the north of the project site, the remains of a farmstead, sheepfold and substantial field boundary are to be found. They are most likely the remnants of this early period of sheep farming, perhaps co-existing with the occupation of the settlement of Achleum-a-choid. The altitude, the short summers and the lack of lower ground for over-wintering made sheep farming unviable and by the 1820s the lands were being advertised as a sporting estate. Strangely the Thomson map of 1830 has no mention of Achleum/Achnachoid, however the census records of 1841 has Donald Macpherson, agricultural labourer, and his wife, together with Donald MacBean, aged 20 (also an agricultural labourer) living there. In c.1890 a keepers cottage was built to the north of the site and the name "Achleum" seems to have been transferred to this (it is marked as Achleum on the current OS maps). A bridge was also constructed over "the leap"(probably not the current bridge) to allow access to the "pony path" which led up into Coire Fhearnagan.

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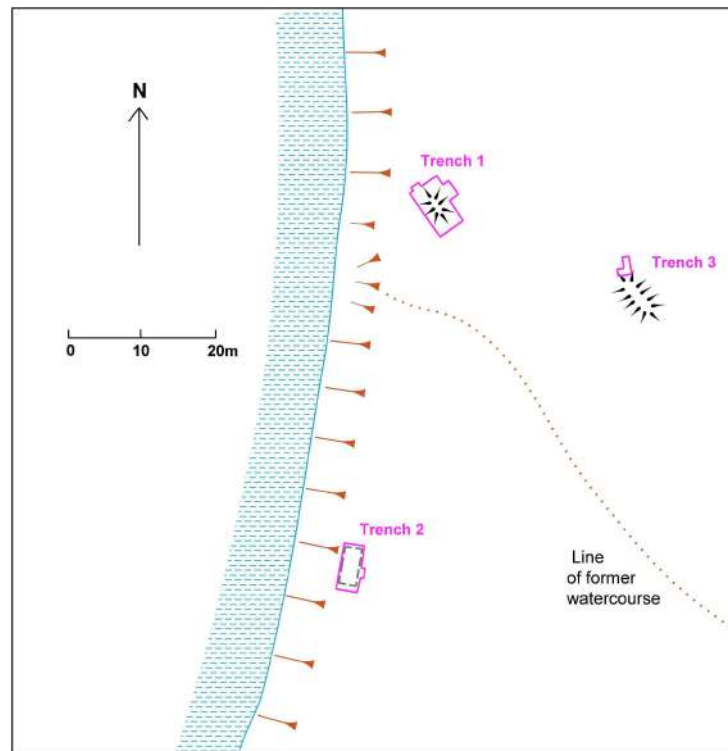
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NAS GD 176/1514

5. Methods



2006 Pre excavation plan of the three structures showing proximity of the river and siting of the trenches

Trench 1 - NW building

The backfilled material from the 2004 excavation was removed and the trench cleaned back. The trench, measuring 7.5m x 5m, encompassed the whole building. It was extended to incorporate an area measuring 3m x 1m outside the entrance of the building on the east side, but did not include the small mound located 5m from the entrance which was thought to be a possible midden mound. It also became obvious that the area of stones at the NW corner of the structure would deserve exploration, so the trench was extended by 1.2m x 0.7m to include this.

Loose stone was removed from the unexcavated southern third of the building. A few obvious loose stones were removed from the entrance and the adjacent external area to define the "windbreak". A linear stone setting in the wall to the north was revealed. The discrete area of stones to the north of the NW corner of the building was defined, with no stones being removed here. The three newly excavated areas were cleaned up. Plan drawings at a scale of 1:20 were made and in the case of the drawing of the south part of the building, a 0.5m overlap with 2004 plan of north part of the building was included. Digital photographs were taken of all the areas which had received attention, including a discrete setting of stones external to the SW end of the west wall of the building and an area of small pebbles at the south end of the building.

The removal of the loose stonework from the area of the building revealed stones which were reasonably firmly set and it became increasingly difficult to distinguish structural from clearance stonework. Therefore, a trench, 1m wide and located between the 7m and 8m marks was excavated across the building. This position was chosen to take in the corner of the "notch" at the east side of the building and also the amorphous internal face of the wall at the south end of the building. The excavated trench was photographed, a plan-drawing made at a scale of 1:20 and levels were taken. The SE face of the trench was photographed in a series of overlapping photographs. Just before backfilling at the end of the project, the SE face of the trench/section was "pulled back" in an attempt to identify the internal face once more, but no such thing was found.

There was not time to excavate the small mound to the NE of the building but on probing it was discovered to be mostly made up of stones and therefore more likely to be a small clearance cairn rather than a midden. The trench was backfilled and re-instated as near as possible to its original condition

Trench 2 - Southern ?building

A trench, 9.6m x 3.8m, was identified. It was parallel to the edge of the river bank and as close to it as was safely possible to work. The east edge of the trench was later extended by 2.7m x 0.6m to the east, to take in an area of stones which appeared to be significant. The site was extremely dry and the trench had to be de-turfed using mattocks after machine strimming to remove the rank growth. This also made trowelling difficult and much of the preliminary cleaning down was done with mattock and draw-hoe.

Halfway through the first day, the trench was almost abandoned as the stonework did not appear to have any form. Thankfully perseverance produced some semblance of set stones on the west side of the trench by the end of the afternoon. A very low, level mound of stones, was uncovered, slightly truncated on the west by the river and on the east by field cultivation and a track. The long axis was orientated north to south rather than north-north east to south-south-west as thought prior to excavation.

As work progressed, a number of putative post sockets formed by stone settings began to appear, and these are numbered P1 to P17 on the pre-excitation plan (Trench 2 - Drawing No1). These were cleaned out, with no stones being removed. Due to the time constraints of the excavation a number of other possible post sockets in the slot trench ABCD were not

cleaned out prior to excavation of the slot trench. Various alignments of stones were identified and these have been highlighted in drawing No1. The whole structure was cleaned up, photographed and plan drawn at a scale of 1:20. Photographs were also taken of each post socket and some of the stone settings. Later general photographs of the site with pink tape identifying each slot were taken from N,S and E.

A slot trench of 1m width was identified at the 5.5m to 6.5m mark. It was thought that it might include a possible entrance to the building and a possible windbreak. Loose stones were removed and it was cleaned down, photographed and plan drawn at a scale of 1:20, before being excavated down to the natural ground surface. It was photographed and plan-drawn again. A plan drawing of the north face of the slot at a scale of 1:20 was made at this stage too. Levels were taken over the whole trench including the excavated slot.

Trench 3 - SE cairn/building

The mound external to the NE corner of the SE building was chosen for closer inspection. It was the largest, appeared less stony and was in a suitable position to support a tail-fork. A trench 1.7 m long (N-S) by 1 metre wide was opened over the mound to the east of the centre line of the feature. The trench was deturfed using a spade and cleaned down by trowel. It was plan-drawn at a scale of 1:20, photographed and levelled. The section through the mound was cleaned and a plan drawing of the cross-section at a scale of 1:10 made.

It was decided to extend the trench to the south by 0.6 m (making the section 2.3m in width) to include a hollow on the possible line of the tail fork and obtain a longer section. This was added to the drawings. The trench was again extended to the west by 1m, to take in the whole extent of the hollow. By doing this, it cut through the apex of the mound, but left a quadrant of it and included the possible edge of the structure to the south.

A circular stone setting was revealed, all the stones slanting inwards, with a smaller circle of 3 small stones within the larger. One stone (probable tumble) was removed from the centre, and the area cleaned and photographed. The three small stones and some soil were then removed to expose a large post pad



Pre excavation photo of Trench 2 from the NNE



Pre excavation photo of the NE mound – Trench 3, from the north.
Note also the NW mound to the right

within a distinct, strong and secure setting. This detail was added to Drawing 3.
Time and resources did not allow for more detailed exploration of the SE cairn/building.

A small pit dug in the field c400mm in diameter and c500mm deep to dispose of the portaloo contents provided a useful test pit and revealed a light coloured stone-free sandy loam to c300mm deep with increasing stone content in a sandy sub-soil below. A member of the team did explore the surrounding area prospecting for evidence of other shieling activities. Notes and grid references were taken of all sites. In the event nothing connected with shieling activity was found but all the other sites encountered are included in the results section of this report.

Digital photographs were taken at each stage of the excavation, as well as to illustrate the progress of the work and a diary was kept throughout the proceedings.

6. Results and Interpretation

6.1 - Trench 1

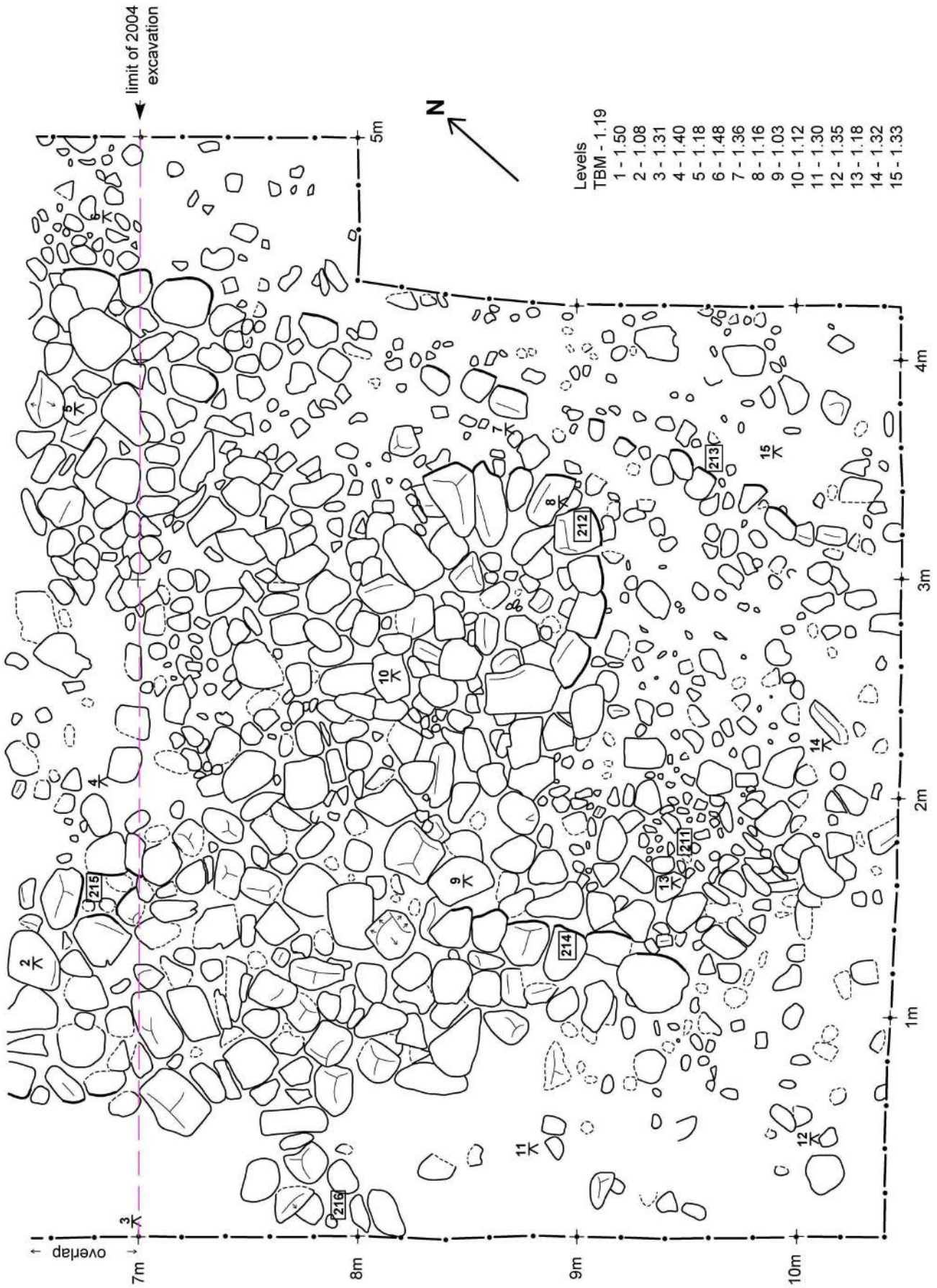
Following the removal of tumble and cleared stone from the northern part of the building in 2004, this procedure was repeated for the southern third of the building. The whole of the stony mound has now been more clearly defined, enabling a more accurate assessment of the nature of the structure to be made, while also enabling greater understanding of the entrance and the NW corner of the building, first exposed in 2004.



Trench 1 from the southeast

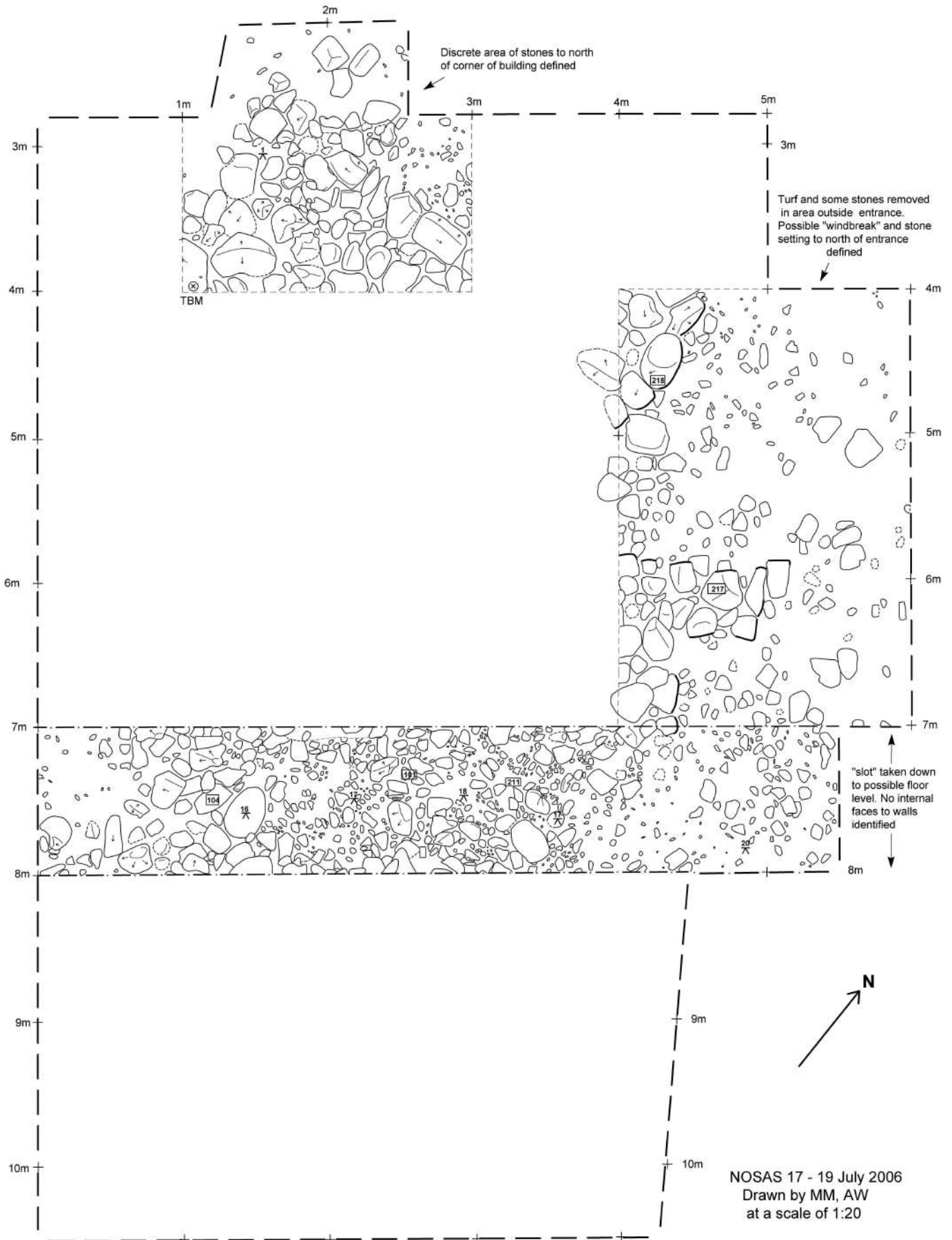


Trench 1 from the southwest



NOSAS 17 - 19 July 2006
 Drawn by MM at a scale of 1:20

GF06 - Achleum, Glen Feshie, Trench 1, Plan 1



GF06 Achleum, Glen Feshie - Trench 1, Plan 3 (with addition of part of entrance area originally drawn on Plan 2)

Initially, the southern third of the building appeared as an amorphous mass of stones, with none of the regular faces apparent in the northern end of the building, although the external face of the wall was clearly defined along the SW side, at the SE corner and less clearly at the SW corner. In as far as it was possible to determine, the overall length of the building was 5.5m. In the centre, the structure was 3.8m wide, narrowing to 2.9m at the south end where the trench was laid out. A very roughly paved area extended 1.2m to the south of the south wall.

When the tumble was removed from the interior, the internal face of the walls of the building were not as obvious as they had been at the north end of the structure, while the outer face – apart from a short stretch of the SW wall – was equally difficult to define. The outer face of the SW wall was made up of larger stones, closely packed and of irregular size and shape, but these were not matched where the other side of the wall should have been, approx.

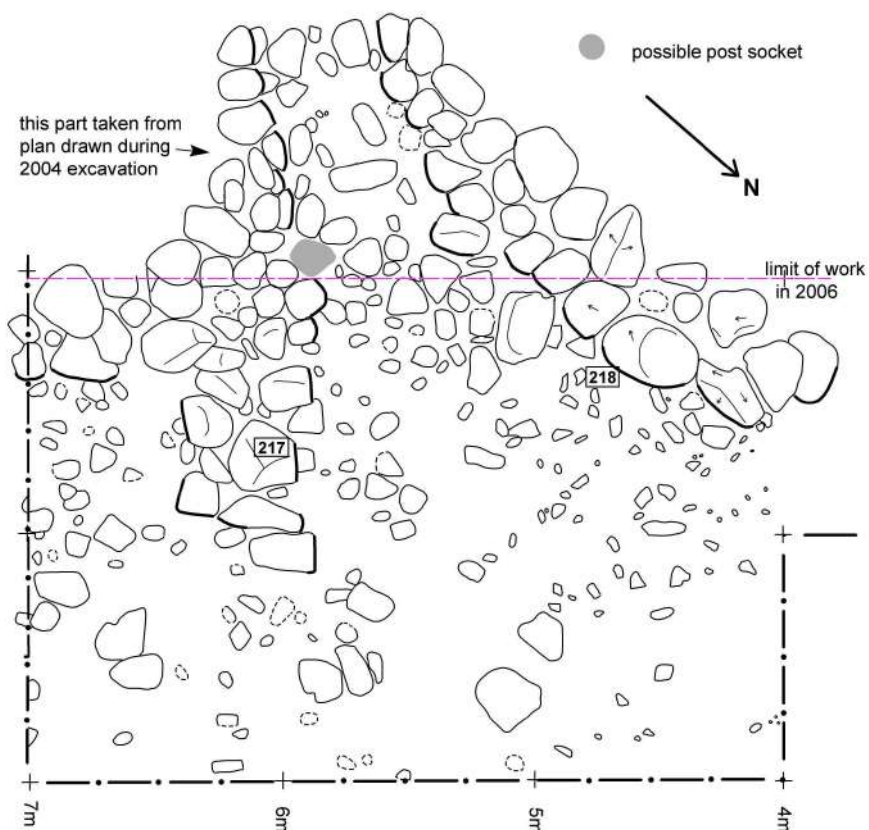
At the SE corner there was a distinct setting of larger stones which formed the corner, context 212. It was 1.8m in length and although on the line of the wall, did not seem to be part of the structure, but rather a platform, measuring roughly 1m diameter. When part of this was dismantled at the end of the excavation, there was a pebble/gravel mix (context 211) underlying it (see later comments). The internal and external faces at the SW corner were much more difficult to define, but the edge of the stony mound did have a fairly distinct and consistent curve at this end of the trench.

Floor levels within the interior of the building were equally difficult to identify. Within the trench, smaller stones (context 101) set within a black matrix (context 102) extended across the whole of the floor area. A possible cobbled area at the east end of the slot trench was ruled out as it was felt that the stones were not firmly enough set. A discrete deposit of loose small pebbles, gravel and sand (context 211) at this end of the slot was the same as that under context 212 and contiguous with it. It is discussed further below.

During the process of removing stones in the slot trench a roughly circular stone setting (context 215), roughly 20 cms in diameter and 12 cms deep, had appeared on the north side of the trench (see plan drawing). There were three more features of interest at this end of the building. One was a stone setting (context 216) external to the SW wall and in which there appeared to be a slot. It



The stone setting at the SE corner – context 212, from NE



GF06 Achleum Trench 1 - Composite plan of entrance and adjacent area

may have been the socket for a tailfork (an external wooden prop). Together with the internal circular stone setting (context 215), which may have been a socket for an internal prop, it may indicate that this part of the building was in need of extra support. It is after all the most exposed side of the building. The second feature of interest was a possible linear setting of larger stones (context 214), at the SW corner, which may have been the internal face to a wall and the west side of an entrance. The third feature (context 213) was a gently curving setting of stones, 2m in length, embedded in the natural soil external to the SE corner and roughly in a continuous line with the outer NE wall face. This setting of smaller stones and the curving nature of the mound at the SW corner may indicate that the building was originally longer and may have had a rounded south end (to combat the wind). It was postulated during the course of the excavation that there may have been battering at this end or that there may have been an external outhouse or animal pen, but there was no convincing evidence for these.

During this season, the entrance at the northeast end of the east wall was more clearly defined, but disappointingly the area external to it revealed no clues to the activities that went on and no finds or structural evidence were revealed. The identification of the linear stone setting, 1.5m in length in the wall to the north did however define an area which would have provided good shelter in which to work and which may even have been covered over (see plan).



The entrance area and the NE corner of the building

It was thought that the discrete area of stones to the north of the NW corner may have provided a base of support for a tailfork but no positive evidence for this was found, even after the removal of tumble. No further prop sockets were positively identified and disappointingly no significant finds were made in the whole building. The absence of pottery may indicate that most vessels were of wood – or simply that everything was taken away at the end of the summer.

The absence of any, even roughly, defined walls in the south end of the building and the contrast in construction of this end with the north end, would seem to indicate that the structure had been drastically altered in some way. It would appear that the south end of the building has collapsed at some time, and that there has been some attempt at reconstruction of this end, possibly in order to use the building as a byre or store. Either it succumbed to the wind and weather - it is the most exposed end of the building - or it was inundated by a flood, possibly in the 18th or 19th Centuries. The River Feshie is well known for its sudden spates and particularly devastating floods are documented in 1768 and in 1829 (see Sir Thomas Dick Lauder - *The Great Moray Floods of 1829*). The flood could have washed away part of the south end

of the building, depositing loose gravel and pebbles around the south end and inside the SE corner (context 211). This corner is currently marginally lower than the rest of the building. Whatever the nature of the event which caused the collapse of the south end, the north part of the building remained intact and by shortening the building, making it narrower at this end and constructing a crude wall (with a possible entrance) across the southern end, the residents of the nearby settlement were able to continue using it as a byre or store. The stone setting at the SE corner (context 212) would appear to be part of this rebuild. The original entrance was then redundant and was crudely blocked up. See Appendix 1 for complete plan of the excavated building.

6.2 - Trench 2

by John Wombell

The site of the trench is situated on the edge of the river bank, on the most northerly of several parallel low gravelly banks running roughly north-south. This area of low gravelly banks probably represents the edge of an earlier spate channel at the point where it discharged back into the main river. The area of low banks is truncated on the west side by the steep right hand bank of the River Feshie and on the other 3 sides by cultivated and improved land.

Trench 2 lies at the north-west corner of this area of low banks, very close to the edge of the river bank, approx 4m above the water level at the time of the excavation. The possible structure under investigation was visible prior to excavation only as a few stones covered by rank heather and mossy turf with just a hint of some setting and alignment running parallel to the river bank. The site was considered as being under threat of total destruction with the next '100 year' spate.

The track from the pony bridge takes a distinct swerve away from the edge of the river bank beside the site, returning back to its original position in relation to the edge once past it, indicating that there could have been a structure or obstacle there of some sort worth avoiding, at the time the track was first established. The positions of the wheel tracks are shown on the pre- excavation drawing No1, as is the position of the outermost furrow of a large field of 'narrow straight-rig type' cultivation remains. The cultivation remains were clearly identifiable in the rank grass sward at the time of the excavation by the darker green colour of the furrows. The field appears to have been very well cultivated in the past and well cleared of stone.

The stones revealed following deturfing of the site appear to represent the remains of a structure, possibly a building, sub-rectangular in form with rounded ends, measuring roughly 6m x 3.5m externally, with internal dimensions indeterminate. It was thought that the relatively few loose stones on top of the



Trench 2 from SSW following removal of turf

structure were either field clearance or clearance from the track. Fortunately some stonework belonging to the structure remains beneath the turf on the track.

The structure in trench 2 appears to be entirely constructed on the hard dry surface of the gravel bank, which may have been levelled off slightly and stripped of any vegetation. There appears to be no footings and no post holes dug into the 'natural' surface. It is difficult to judge the extent of what might be missing on the east side of the structure, possibly very little to the north end of the east side and rather more to the south end of the east side. The river appears to have barely touched the north-west corner of the structure, with a strong possibility that 'everything is there' bar two or three stones, in the narrow strip between the edge of the trench and the lip of the river bank, which would have been too dangerous to excavate.

It is notable that the rigs adjacent to trench 2 have all been truncated by the river possibly by the same event which just clipped the structure. This could indicate that a major flooding event or several major events occurred in comparatively recent times, perhaps during the 19th century. There is no hint of an end-rig beside the river and presumably the track from the pony bridge to Achleum was shifted after this event or series of events.

Various alignments, and settings, have been highlighted in Drawing No1, suggesting both the external and internal faces of the building. As work progressed a number of putative post sockets formed by stone settings began to appear, and these are numbered P1 to P17 on the pre-excavation plan, drawing No1. Sockets nos P3, P4, and P5 are ramped in the direction of the south-west corner of the structure and have been interpreted as possible tail-fork positions. If this interpretation is correct, counterbalancing sockets for tail-forks opposite to the south-east corner of



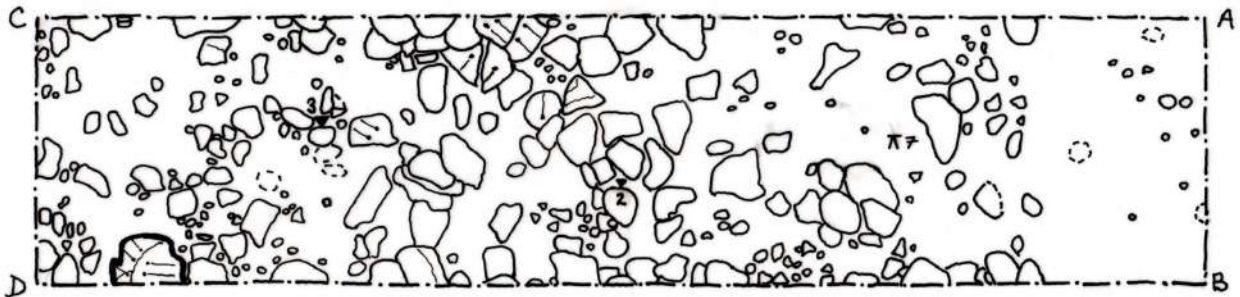
The ramped post sockets at the S end of trench 2, from left to right P5, P4 and P3



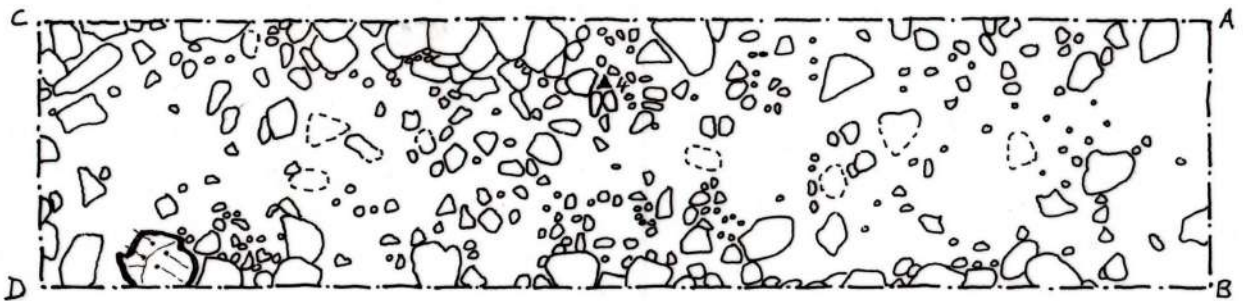
Post socket 11



Post socket 14



DRAWING No 2 Following removal of loose stones and cleaning down



DRAWING No 3 Following excavation to expose the 'natural' ground surface



DRAWING No 4 Section A-C Following excavation to expose natural ground surface



GLEN FESHIE 2006 TRENCH No 2
 DRAWINGS NOS. 2, 3 and 4
 EXCAVATION OF SLOT TRENCH ABCD
 SCALE 1:20 , DATE: 19/07/06
 DRAWN BY: J.W.

the structure were not identified, the evidence possibly destroyed by field clearance and the establishment of the track. There were no obviously ramped tail fork sockets in evidence at the north end of the structure but again these could have been lost to cultivation, or there may have been some other structural arrangement at the north end.

No evidence of any hearth or burning activity was found within the margins of the trench and the time constraints of the excavation. A few small flakes of charcoal were found under the central area of the slot trench. There was just one find, a piece of thick coarse green glass, found c150mm below ground level in the slot trench.

Much of the structure appears to remain as a single layer of stone-work set immediately on top of compacted soil. Only in the centre of the structure is there any evidence of any layering of stones (see the section drawing No4).

Bearing in mind the extremely dry conditions during the excavation the matrix amongst the stones was a dark grey sandy soil, solid with heather roots. Below this a layer c25-30mm thick of heavily compacted grey sandy soil, interspersed with pockets of lighter soil and thin lenses of red iron oxide deposits. This layer was consistent over the whole of the slot trench, sitting directly on the 'natural' gravel surface, and

was also full of fine fibrous roots. The base layer of stones, where there was evidence of more than one layer, was sitting on this thin heavily compacted layer of grey sandy soil. Stones of various sizes were securely embedded in the surface of the natural gravel.

There was no evidence of much (if any) turf used in construction and no evidence of any stone tumble. There was definite evidence of disturbance and loss due to cultivation. There was no evidence that any structure might have been burned down.

Interpretation of the building in trench 2

We revealed a most enigmatic structure in trench 2, which seems to have been constructed around a light timber frame construction with posts set up directly onto the possibly deliberately levelled natural gravel surface, secured from lateral movement at their bases by stone settings and extended cobbling, and from movement above by the use of props or tail-forks.

That we were unable to find any hearth or evidence of fires within the structure does not mean of course that there may not have been fires outwith the trench where the field remains are, nor that the structure could never have been a temporary dwelling. However the purpose of possibly discrete areas of crude cobbling within the structure, shown in Drawing No1, noticeably fractionally lower than the wall bases, have us guessing.

There is a reasonably clear 'key-hole' shaped area within the structure and a clearer possible entrance on the east side. There are 5 stones with a nice straight edge on the north side of this possible entrance, which lie exactly parallel to the outer margin of the west wall base. This could be a fluke of truncation by ploughing but it is more likely that ploughing would have displaced at least some of the stones. On the south side of the possible entrance are another 3 very neatly set stones, and the remains of an equally neat circular stone setting 1.5m in diameter externally. This circular or semi-circular feature appears to abut another small section of the east wall base, which has been considerably disturbed. The possible purpose of this circular feature is returned to later.



Trench 2 following excavation from the east

The putative post sockets are spaced out around the structure and some could be related to internal divisions. Various roof arrangements can be postulated and it is possible that the structure could have been largely open-sided to the east. The site may have gone through a number of re-developments and adaptations, although - given the nature of the structure - there was little evidence to confirm or disprove this.

There are 3 large conical stones labelled S1, S2 and S3 on Drawing No1 set in a very stable fashion at the edges of the wall bases. Levels were taken on the top of stones S1 and S2 and they were found to have a difference of just 10mm. Stone S3 appeared from sight to be very similar in level. We did not find a stone No4 to make the obvious square but we may have removed it in the excavation of the slot trench without realising its possible significance. The purpose of stones placed in this way is unclear

Our own observations and the Bil quotes (Appendix 2) give us several clues as to the possible nature of sheiling at Achleum-a-Choid prior to the eventual permanent settlement of this area. There is every possibility that a range of livestock types was taken up to Achleum-a-Choid. Whilst cows may have been grazed in clearings within the haugh woodland, younger cattle, sheep and goats could have been herded the short distances up to higher ground and brought back down at night to the haugh for safety and milking.

Trench No 2 was aceramic, as was trench No1, suggesting the use of wooden bowls, tubs, buckets, and wooden tools etc. The postulation at Easter Raitts was that the aceramic period predated the construction

of Ruthven barracks in the early part of the 18th century (Olivia Lelong, pers. comm.). The single piece of broken glass remains as yet undated, but it was found in a position beside the inner face of the possible western wall base (see Drawing No 2). It could represent an outcome of a single accident within the structure.

Two possible interpretations can be postulated for this structure which may have more credibility than a function as a dwelling. It might have been an overnight sheep or goat shelter and undercover milking shed, entirely constructed of timber, i.e. a timber frame with wattle walls and a light thatched roof. The good ventilation provided by such a structure would have been a health bonus for the animals. We have suggested earlier that the structure may have been entirely open on the east side. There could also have been a wattle pen extending eastward beyond the structure. The circular stone feature on the east side could have been the base for a fodder hake of some sort. The extended cobble platforms inside the structure could be interpreted as the bases for bedding to keep a small number of milking animals dry in wet weather. The piece of broken glass could have come from a bottle used for either animal dosing or for feeding an orphan lamb or goat kid. A second interpretation is that the structure might have been a dry store for the various sheiling produce until such time as it was taken back to the wintertown.

Generally speaking all the evidence so far, both historical and archaeological, points to the sheiling structures at Achleum a Choid being 17th century or earlier in date. The difficulties of interpreting the archaeological features recovered suggests not only the ephemeral nature of such structures, but also the possibility that they have been used and re-used over a long period of time.

6.3 - Trench 3

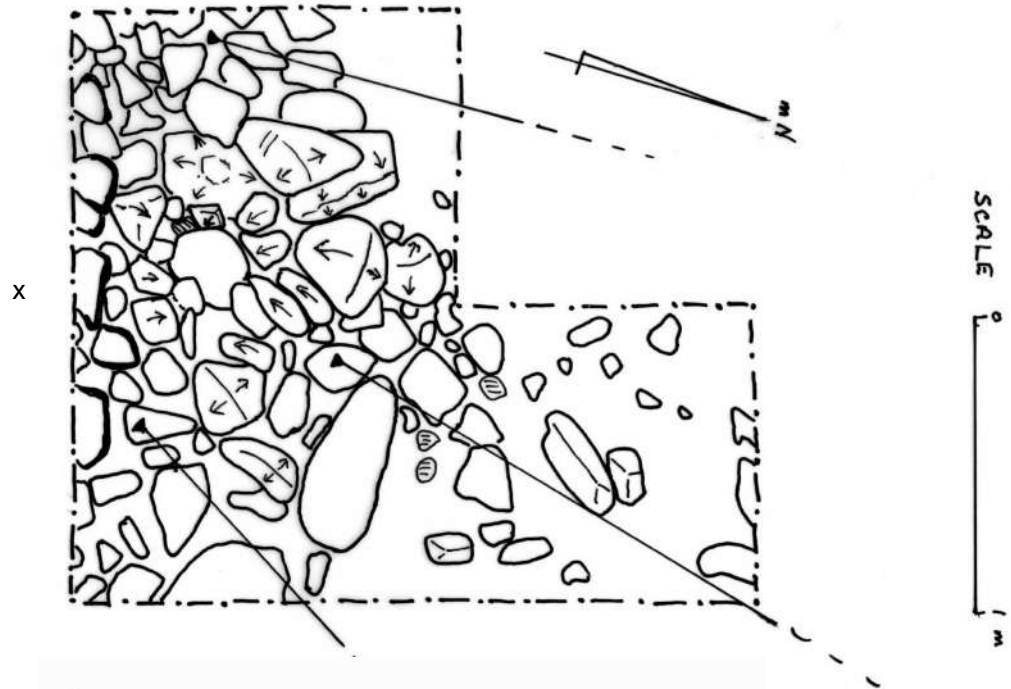
by Ann Wakeling

The original aim of this trench was to establish whether or not the mound acted as the base for a "tail-fork". It seems reasonable to assume that the stone pad with the stone setting surrounding it revealed in the trench was in fact the base for the tailfork, and that the mound was part of the associated mechanism to secure the base of the prop. The stone setting with the pad, the 2 large stones and the mound are on a direct line which is an extension of the tailfork. The prop would have been one of two supporting the north end of the building. The nearby mound 2m to the SW represents the other counterbalancing prop. The inclusion of the edge of the building represented by a linear stone setting at the south end of the trench is a bonus and gives an idea of the relationship and proximity of the prop to the building.

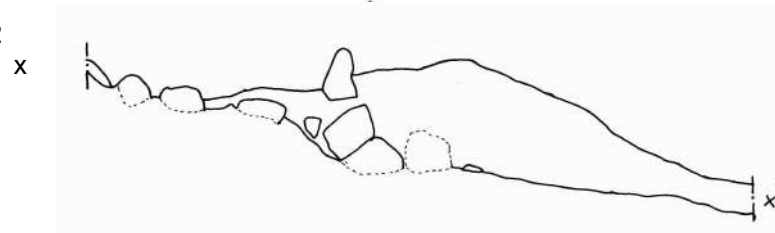


Trench 3 from the NE following excavation

Trench 3 Drawing 3



Trench 3 Drawing 2



It is difficult to determine whether or not the mound was pushed up naturally by the downwards forces of the prop onto the stones or whether the mound was put there intentionally to support the system. Considering the 2 large stones on the same line and the size of the mound it would seem to be the latter.

It appears at some point that the original large prop was replaced by a smaller one, hence the smaller setting of stones on top of the original stone pad. It is documented that such props were taken to other locations and reused and of course they would have had a limited lifespan, so this is a reasonable assumption.

The presence of the post pad and its setting proves beyond all doubt that this site is a building.

Almost certainly the other 4 mounds, one at each corner of the building, represent similar bases for the corresponding tailforks.

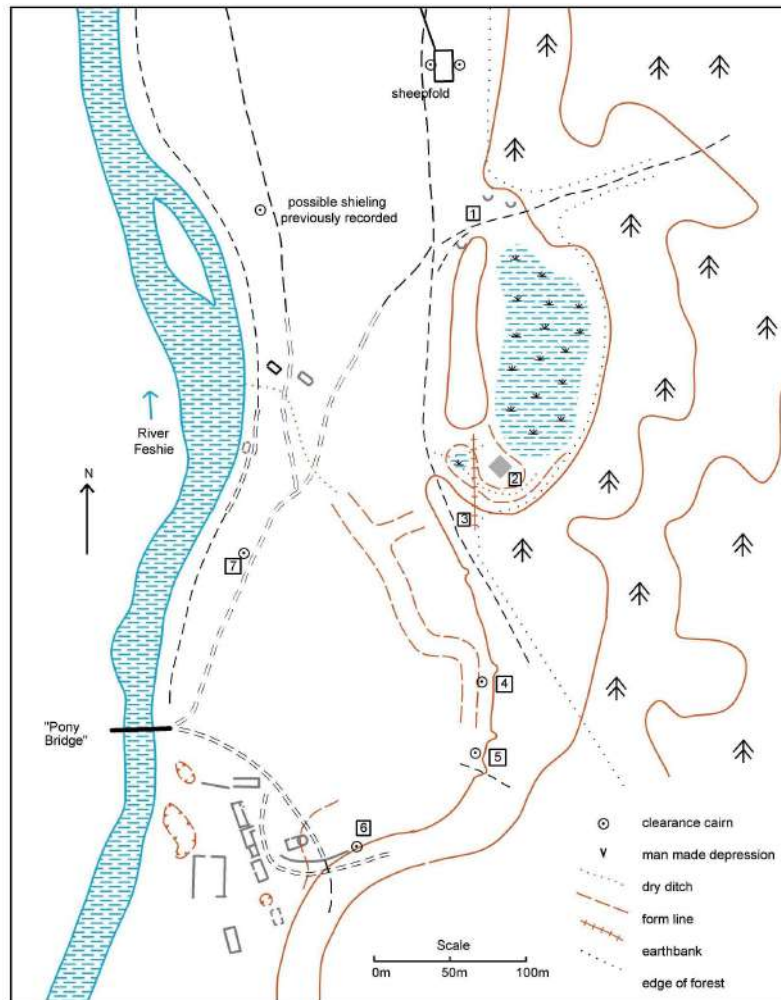


The post pad in trench 3 from the SW. The stone setting at the right of the trench is thought to be the edge of the building

6.4 - Prospection of surrounding area for evidence of other shieling activities

A clearance cairn 100m to the north of the site had previously been considered to be a possible shieling. It is of similar size and shape, although on a N - S orientation. Apart from this no other features were identified as being associated with shieling activity, although several other previously unrecorded features were noted (see Appendix 3). Together with those already mentioned in the chapter on "Topography of surrounding environment" the new features amount to evidence of considerable activity in the surrounding area in the years since the shieling period.

It was concluded that there had been so much activity over the last 200 years that, together with the dramatic forces of nature, any evidence of the activities associated with the shielings has been destroyed.



Achleum-a-Choid and surroundings with previously unrecorded features numbered

Summary

During the project 134 photographs were taken, 15 contexts detailed, 9 plans and 2 sections drawn and a diary kept. Only one significant find was made, the glass in trench 2

Four of the five aims of the project were achieved. Time and resources did not allow for the fifth to be even attempted - in retrospect it was perhaps over ambitious

Taking the two excavations together we have proved that the two cairns have buildings underlying them, in all probability these were shielings, We have revealed details of the construction of one of them and put forward a theory as to its fate, adaptation and re-use. For the other building, we have established the nature and purpose of the mounds together with details of the support system for the structure. But perhaps most intriguing of all were the remains of the building in trench 2. From its siting on the edge of the river bank, and its construction the building appears to predate the other two buildings and appears to be of a type not previously located or recorded.

7. Products

7.1 - List of photographs

Trench 1

Pre-excavation - Previous backfill and turf only removed from feature

T1 01 - site from SE

T1 02 - site from SE

T1 03 - site from NE

T1 04 - site from SW

Clearance material removed from previously unexcavated part of site (approx one third at south end) and trench extended to include area external to entrance also cobbled area external to NW corner

T1 05 - site from SE

T1 06 - site from SE

T1 07 - site from SE

T1 08 - site from SE

T1 09 - site from NE

T1 10 - site from NW

T1 11 - site from NW

T1 12 - site from NW

T1 13 - site from NW

T1 14 - site from SW

T1 15 - site from SW

T1 16 - detail of area external to entrance, from NE, showing "windbreak" on left

T1 17 - detail of area external to entrance, from NE, showing "windbreak" on left

T1 18 - detail of area external to entrance, from NE, showing "windbreak" on left

T1 19 - detail of stone setting at SE corner, from NE

T1 20 - detail of stone setting at SE corner, from SE

T1 21 - detail of area to south of SW corner, from SE

T1 22 - detail of external stones at S end of west wall

T1 23 - detail of area to north of NW corner, from SW

T1 24 - detail of area to north of NW corner, from SW

T1 25 - detail of area to north of NW corner, from NW

Excavation of 1m slot/section

T1 26 - line from NE - pre-excavation

T1 27 - line from SW - pre-excavation

T1 28 - slot from NE - post-excavation

T1 29 - slot from NE - post-excavation

T1 30 - slot from SW - post-excavation

T1 31 - slot from SW - post-excavation

T1 32 - south edge/section of slot from NW - east part of series

T1 33 - south edge/section of slot from NW - east part of series (closer)

T1 34 - south edge/section of slot from NW - west part of series

T1 35 - south edge/section of slot from NW - west part of series (closer)

Trench 2

Pre-excavation

T2 01 - site from S

T2 02 - site from S

T2 03 - site from S

T2 04 - site from E

T2 05 - site from N

T2 06 - site from N

T2 07 - site from N

T2 08 - site from N

Turf removed

T2 09 - site from S

T2 10 - site from S

T2 11 - site from S

T2 12 - site from S
T2 13 - site from S
T2 14 - site from E
T2 15 - site from E - south part -series A
T2 16 - site from E - north part -series A
T2 17 - site from E - south part -series B (closer)
T2 18 - site from E - north part -series B
T2 19 - detail of possible entrance on east side of trench, from east
T2 20 - detail of possible entrance on east side of trench, from east
T2 21 - Possible linear stone setting at north end of trench, from N
T2 22 - Stone settings x 3 (possible bases for external props) at south end of trench, from S

Excavation of 1m slot/section

T2 23 - line from E - pre-excavation
T2 24 - line from W - pre-excavation
T2 25 - line from E - post-excavation
T2 26 - line from W - post-excavation
T2 27 - north edge/section of slot from S - west part of series
T2 28 - north edge/section of slot from S - west/middle part of series
T2 29 - north edge/section of slot from S - east/middle part of series
T2 30 - north edge/section of slot from S - east of series
T2 31 - extension on east side of trench, from S
T2 32 - extension on east side of trench, from S

Detail of stone settings - possible bases for posts

T2 33 - post socket 1, from S
T2 34 - post socket 2, from S
T2 35 - post socket 3, from S
T2 36 - post socket 3, from S (closer)
T2 37 - post socket 4, from S
T2 38 - post socket 5, from S
T2 39 - post socket 5, from S
T2 40 - post socket 6, from S
T2 41 - post socket 6, from S (closer)
T2 42 - post socket 7, from SW
T2 43 - post socket 8, from S
T2 44 - post socket 9, from SSW
T2 45 - post socket 9, from N
T2 46 - post socket 10, from N
T2 47 - post socket 11, from N
T2 48 - post socket 12, from N
T2 49 - post socket 13, from SW
T2 50 - post socket 14, from W
T2 51 - post socket 15, from W
T2 52 - post socket 16 & 17, from N
T2 53 - post socket 16, from N
T2 54 - post socket 17, from N

General views with post sockets marked

T2 55 - from ET2 56 - from E - south part - series A
T2 57 - from E - north part - series A
T2 58 - from E - south part - series B
T2 59 - from E - middle part - series B
T2 60 - from E - north part - series B
T2 61 - from S
T2 62 - from S
T2 63 - from S
T2 64 - from S
T2 65 - from N
T2 66 - from N
T2 67 - from N
T2 68 - from N
T2 69 - from N

Trench 3

Pre-excavation

T3 01 - site from NW
T3 02 - site from NW
T3 03 - site from NE
T3 04 - site from N

Transverse section of mound made and trench of 1m width excavated

T3 05 - trench from N
T3 06 - trench from N
T3 07 - trench from S
T3 08 - trench from E showing sectioned mound
T3 09 - Sectioned mound from E

Trench extended to south and then west to include "hollow" area of stones, retaining one quadrant of mound

T3 10 - extended trench from N
T3 11 - extended trench from N
T3 12 - detail of extended area showing hollow of stones, from N
T3 13 - detail of extended area showing hollow of stones, from N
T3 14 - detail of extended area showing hollow of stones, from N
T3 15 - extended trench from E
T3 16 - extended trench from E

Small number of stones removed from centre of hollow to reveal post/tailfork pad

T3 17 - trench, showing alignment of mound, two large stones (supports) and post pad from N
T3 18 - trench, showing alignment of two large stones (supports) and post pad from N
T3 19 - trench, from E
T3 20 - showing alignment of mound, two large stones (supports) and post pad from E
T3 21 - trench, from W
T3 22 - trench, from W

Achleum Environs

AE1 - Platform (2) from the South-west
AE2 - Platform (2) from the South
AE3 - Platform (2) from the South
AE4 - Platform (2) from the South
AE5 - Platform (2) from the South
AE6 - The fertile flats from the SSE with Clearance cairn (4) in foreground.
AE7 - Clearance cairn (5) from SE
AE8 - The fertile flats from the SSE with the former watercourses just visible

7.2 - List of Plans

1. Trench 1 - Drawing 1 - Plan of majority of south part of building with clearance material removed
2. Trench 1 - Drawing 2 - A. Plan of a. small section of south part of building as Plan 1, plus
B. Plan of south part of external entrance area
3. Trench 1 - Drawing 3 - A. Plan of 1m slot section through width of building excavated to possible floor level,
B. Plan of north part of external entrance area and
C. Plan of discrete area of stones to N of NW corner of building.
4. Trench 2 - Drawing 1 - Pre excavation (turf only removed) with post excavation detail of putative post sockets
5. Trench 2 - Drawing 2 - 1m slot section across width following removal of loose stones and cleaning up
Drawing 3 - 1m slot section following excavation to expose the "natural" ground surface
Drawing 4 - Section A-C following excavation to expose the "natural" ground surface
6. Trench 3 - Drawing 1 - First level of excavation with quadrant of "mound" retained
Drawing 2 - Section drawing X-X¹ through mound
Drawing 3 - Following final level of excavation with post pad exposed

7.3 - List of Contexts

- Trench 1 100 Topsoil
 101 Tumble and clearance material
 102 Black matrix of internal area
 104 Wall
 211 Gravelly material with small pebbles
 212 Stone structure forming southeast corner
 213 Linear stone setting external to SE corner
 214 Linear stone setting at SW end
 215 Sub-circular stone setting
 216 Discrete area of stones external to SW wall
 217 Discrete area of stones to SE of entrance
 218 Linear setting of stones at N end of E wall
- Trench 3 300 turf & topsoil
 301 loamy fine sand
 302 peaty loamy fine sand

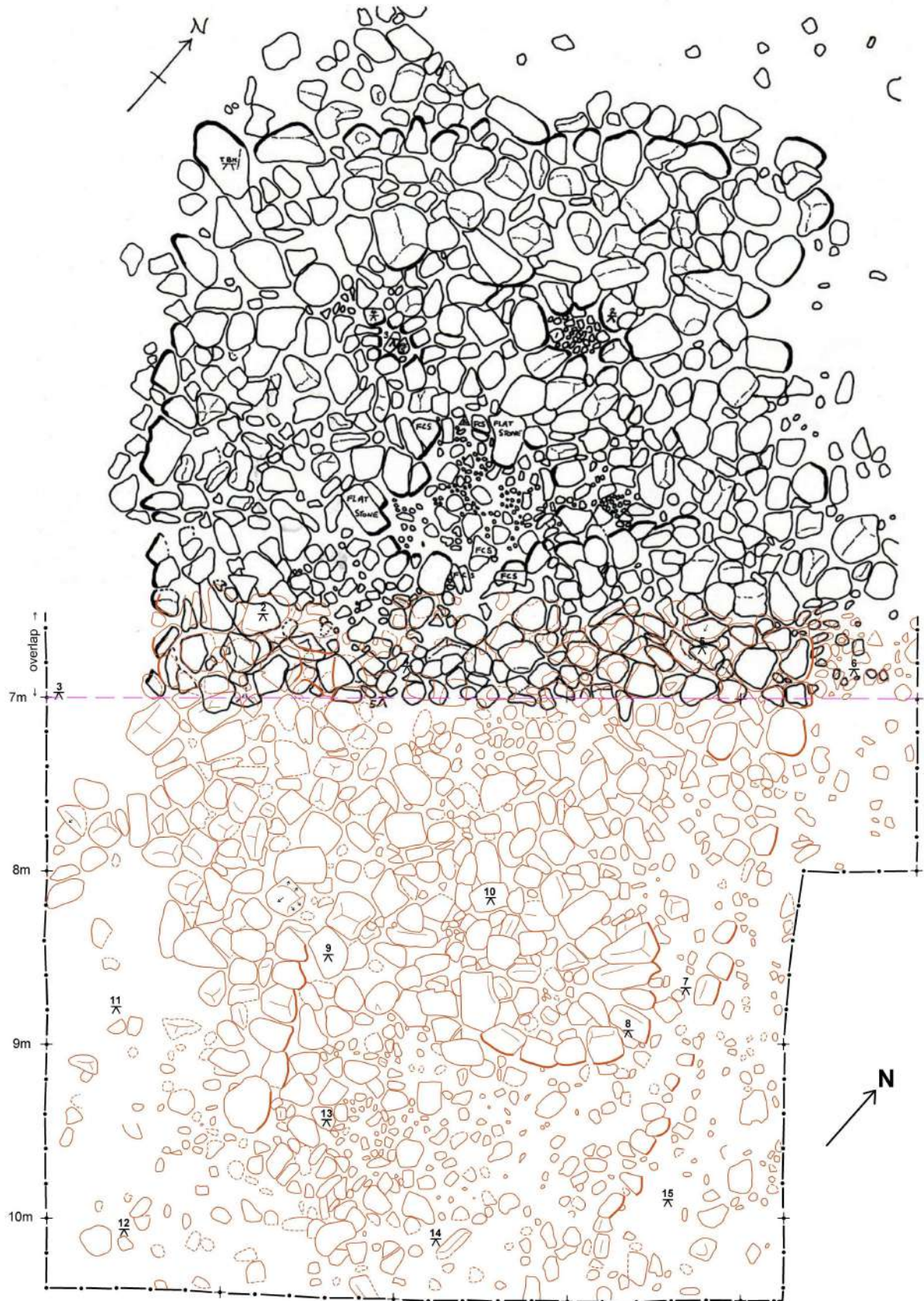
7.4 - List of Finds

- Trench 2 1. Piece of glass

7.5 - List of Samples

- Trench 2 1. Context ? from slot, matrix above natural

Appendix 1



GF06 - Achleum, Glen Feshie - Trench 1 Plan 1 (in brown)
combined with plan of north part of building from 2004 excavation

Appendix 2

Quotes from Albert Bil's 'The Sheiling 1600 to 1840' (1991)

by John Wombell

This book is mostly about sheiling practise in Highland Perthshire but as this area immediately adjoins Glen Feshie it seems pertinent to quote from it.

1. 'The whole range of farm livestock participated: the cows, the sheep, the goats, the horses, the pigs and even the poultry'
2. 'Livestock farming in Highland Perthshire was based on sound ecological principles and both terrain and pasture influenced the type of livestock kept'. He then asserts that a typical sheiling would have a range of plant species and topography to satisfy several types of livestock.
3. Referring to goats he states that 'the goat represented the subsistence livestock of the poorest humble tenant in the wider Scottish Highlands' but he goes on to assert that in the 17th century and even later, landlords kept large flocks of goats also. He makes several mentions of the practise of consuming goat's whey as a cure all, much favoured by valetudinarians prior to the coming into vogue of drinking mineral water for the same purpose. He speaks of many 'goat's wheying stations' at summer pastures being visited by the gentry of the day.
4. Referring to the Strathspey Forest of Glaiik he states that there were: 'a great number of cows, oxen, horses, sheep, wedders, goats, with men, women, dogs and servants at the sheilings'.
5. When discussing sheiling practice undergoing change, he suggests that there was a variety of sheiling residential types and arrangements and that these also varied from estate to estate and that there were regional differences.
6. When discussing sheep farming and the demise of sheiling he states that: 'under the old agricultural regime sheep were housed overnight at the farm and the sheiling. The tenants of Auchmore in Rannoch were typical of farmers everywhere in the Central highlands in that their farm accommodation included a "sheep house" occupied by the sheep during the winter months. The sheep cotts however built outside the head dykes by the tenants in Sliesmein were likelier examples of buildings on the outfield tathings or the summer pastures, the latter occupied at milking time and overnight to safeguard the stock from wild predators on the hills. The habit of providing all night shelter disappeared as Blackface sheep were brought in to replace the traditional breed, becoming increasingly redundant as sheep smearing, a practise designed to combat the cold and improve the wool grew in popularity. He goes on to state that by the 1780s landowners widely encouraged the abandonment of sheep housing and goes on to quote examples. He further states that tenants were not encouraged to milk Blackface sheep whilst that the native breed was extensively milked prior to 1800. After that date the practise died out.
7. 'Part of the dairy manufacture and its by products were consumed at the sheiling but a large part was inevitably stored to feed the community during the winter months and to contribute towards the payment of tenant's rents'. 'The laird of Lude for instance instructed his tenants to hand over their respective quantities of butter good, clean and sufficient, by the end of June, and cheese payments by the end of August'.
8. He also refers to a close association between sheiling and lumber work.
9. He discusses at length the gradual cultivation of sheilings and their permanent settlement.
10. And lastly it is worth reiterating his statement regarding Invercauld's instruction to his tenants in 1725 not to use pine from his woods for building purposes any longer, but that that they could continue to use birch.

Our own observations and the above quotes give us several clues as to the possible nature of sheiling at Achleum a Choid prior to its cultivation and its eventual permanent settlement.

Appendix 3

Previously Unrecorded Sites in area surrounding Achleum - see plan on page 23

The watercourse adjacent to the shieling site appears on the OS map but it is now just a dry broad channel. The channel runs in a south easterly direction and terminates after 200m at the foot of a steep bank (the river terrace). There is no evidence of it having originated at a higher location. It appeared to be just a small channel in what had been a former river channel.

About 100m to the east of the shieling site, within an area of kames and kettle holes (glacial moraine), there is a large marsh measuring 100m x 50m, the height of which appears to have been raised, with possible banks at each end. It may well be a silted up pond and its purpose, as such, is unclear. It may have been a “duck” pond, constructed for the use of the sporting tenants of the estate or it may have been a “floating pond”, a head of water released to assist the floating of timber down the river. There is a small dry ditch exiting the south end of the marsh, but no evidence of this extending onto the flat haugh and no connection with the small watercourse previously described.

1. Three “borrow” pits close to and associated with the “pony track” which makes its way from the “pony” bridge to Coire Fhearnaghan and was probably constructed in the 1890s

- At NN 85280 96788 - 5m diameter
- At NN 85262 96765 - 5m diameter
- At NN 85262 96765 - 4m diameter

2. Platform at NN 85261 96615 - a hard stony sub-square area, measuring roughly 7m². Several nails and some small pieces of decaying timber indicate that it may have held a timber structure. It was just 6m from the edge of the marsh to the east and may have been associated with the sporting estate or possibly with forestry operations. A couple of spent bullet cartridges were found on the platform.



Platform from the south showing possible silted up pond

3. Earth bank - roughly 60m in length and on a N-S axis it dips across the depression to the west of the platform above. It is no more than 0.5m in height and was probably the base for the deer fence which surrounded the planted forest.

4. Clearance cairn at NN 85250 96501 - 4m x 2m , flattish

5. Clearance cairn at NN 85229 96451 - 5m x 2.5m x 0.5m height. At foot of steep bank.

6. Clearance cairn at NN 85177 96392 - a stone “scatter”, 30m x 2.5m. The extension eastwards of a bank which makes up part of Achleum a Choid settlement - see plan

7. Clearance cairn at NN 85122 96567 - 2m diameter and 0.5m height. Heather covered